

as far N. as Virginia, was loosely designated as Florida in the earlier period, and was entirely within the sphere of Spanish influence until about the end of the seventeenth century. The beginning of definite mission work in the Gulf Territory was made in 1544 when the *Catholic* Franciscan Father Andres de Olmos, a veteran in the Mexican field, struck northward into the Texas wilderness, and after getting about him a considerable body of converts led them back into Tamaulipas, where, under the name of Olives, they were organized into a regular mission town. In 1549 the Dominican Father Luis Cancer with several companions attempted a beginning on the w. coast of Florida, but was murdered by the Indians almost as soon as his feet touched the land. In 1565 St. Augustine (San Augustin) was founded and the work of Christianizing the natives was actively taken up, first by the Jesuits, but later, probably in 1573, by the Franciscans, who continued with it to the end. Within twenty years they had established a chain of flourishing missions along the coast from St. Augustine to St. Helena, in South Carolina, besides several others on the w. Florida coast. In 1597 a portion of the Guale tribe (possibly the Yamasi) on the lower Georgia coast, under the leadership of a rival claimant for the chieftainship, attacked the neighboring missions and killed several missionaries before the friendly Indians could gather for the rescue. In consequence of this blow the work languished for several years, when it was taken up with greater zeal than before and the field extended to the interior tribes. By the year 1615 there were 20 missions, with about 40 Franciscan workers, established in Florida and the dependent coast region. The most noted of these missionaries is Father Francisco Pareja, author of a grammar and several devotional works in the Timucua language, the first books ever printed in any Indian language of the United States and the basis for the establishment of the Timucuan linguistic family. In the year 1655 the Christian Indian population of N. Florida and the Georgia coast was estimated at 26,000.